

FOIA MARKER

This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Legislative Affairs

Series/Staff Member: Subject Files

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 17127

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Cuba/Executive Order

Stack:

S

Row:

26

Section:

3

Shelf:

3

Position:

1

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 5, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Last March, in the wake of Pope John Paul's historic visit to Cuba, I authorized measures designed to ease the plight of the Cuban people and help them prepare for a democratic future. The restoration of direct passenger flights, resumption of family remittances, expansion of people-to-people contacts, and increases in the sale of medicines since then have had a positive impact. They demonstrate the United States' compassion for the Cuban people, our strong interest in building bonds between the citizens of our nations, and our determination to provide the people of Cuba with hope in their struggle against a system that for four decades has denied them even basic human rights.

Building on the success of the measures I announced last March, I am today authorizing additional steps to reach out to the Cuban people:

- Expansion of remittances by allowing any U.S. resident (not only those with families in Cuba) to send limited funds to individual Cuban families as well as to organizations independent of the government.
- Expansion of people-to-people contact through two-way exchanges among academics, athletes, scientists, and others, including streamlining the approval process for such visits.
- Authorization of the sale of food and agricultural inputs to independent non-governmental entities, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and private farmers.
- Authorization of charter passenger flights to cities in Cuba other than Havana and from some cities in the United States other than Miami in order to facilitate family reunification for persons living outside those cities.

- An effort to establish direct mail service to Cuba, as provided for in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

At the same time, we are taking steps to increase the flow of information to the Cuban people and others around the world, by strengthening Radio and TV Marti and launching new public diplomacy programs in Latin America and Europe to keep international attention focused on the need for change in Cuba. The United States will continue to urge the international community to do more to promote respect for human rights and democratic transition in Cuba.

I am also pleased to announce that I intend to nominate Mr. Jose "Pepe" Collado and Ms. Avis Lavelle as members of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting. I further intend to designate Mr. Collado as chairman upon confirmation by the Senate. This important advisory body has been without a chairman since the death of Jorge Mas Canosa more than a year ago. We are processing other nominations and, in cooperation with congressional leaders, will continue to name members of this bipartisan board.

These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban Government. They are consistent with our policy of keeping pressure on the regime for democratic change -- through the embargo and vigorous diplomatic initiatives -- while finding ways to reach out to the Cuban people through humanitarian efforts and help in developing civil society. They are also consistent with the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act. They reflect a strong and growing bipartisan consensus that the United States can and should do more to work with the Cuban people toward a future of democracy and prosperity.

#

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

FAX COVER SHEET

**NATIONAL
SECURITY
COUNCIL**

17th & Penn, N.W.
Washington, D.C.
20504

Did you get a complete,
clear transmission? If not,
please call:

(202) 456-9137

From: Fulton T. Armstrong

To: Al Maldon

Agency: WHLA

Fax Number: 6-2604

No. of pages to follow: 13

Message:

Al: Per our conversation. Let me know if you know more. Note that I've attached this morning's press guidance, which includes important Q&A regarding "Presidential Commission" idea, which we are saying is not going to happen "for the present." --Fulton

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 5, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Last March, in the wake of Pope John Paul's historic visit to Cuba, I authorized measures designed to ease the plight of the Cuban people and help them prepare for a democratic future. The restoration of direct passenger flights, resumption of family remittances, expansion of people-to-people contacts, and increases in the sale of medicines since then have had a positive impact. They demonstrate the United States' compassion for the Cuban people, our strong interest in building bonds between the citizens of our nations, and our determination to provide the people of Cuba with hope in their struggle against a system that for four decades has denied them even basic human rights.

Building on the success of the measures I announced last March, I am today authorizing additional steps to reach out to the Cuban people:

- Expansion of remittances by allowing any U.S. resident (not only those with families in Cuba) to send limited funds to individual Cuban families as well as to organizations independent of the government.
- Expansion of people-to-people contact through two-way exchanges among academics, athletes, scientists, and others, including streamlining the approval process for such visits.
- Authorization of the sale of food and agricultural inputs to independent non-governmental entities, including religious groups and Cuba's emerging private sector, such as family restaurants and private farmers.
- Authorization of charter passenger flights to cities in Cuba other than Havana and from some cities in the United States other than Miami in order to facilitate family reunification for persons living outside those cities.

- An effort to establish direct mail service to Cuba, as provided for in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

At the same time, we are taking steps to increase the flow of information to the Cuban people and others around the world, by strengthening Radio and TV Marti and launching new public diplomacy programs in Latin America and Europe to keep international attention focused on the need for change in Cuba. The United States will continue to urge the international community to do more to promote respect for human rights and democratic transition in Cuba.

I am also pleased to announce that I intend to nominate Mr. Jose "Pepe" Collado and Ms. Avis Lavelle as members of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting. I further intend to designate Mr. Collado as chairman upon confirmation by the Senate. This important advisory body has been without a chairman since the death of Jorge Mas Canosa more than a year ago. We are processing other nominations and, in cooperation with congressional leaders, will continue to name members of this bipartisan board.

These steps are designed to help the Cuban people without strengthening the Cuban Government. They are consistent with our policy of keeping pressure on the regime for democratic change -- through the embargo and vigorous diplomatic initiatives -- while finding ways to reach out to the Cuban people through humanitarian efforts and help in developing civil society. They are also consistent with the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act. They reflect a strong and growing bipartisan consensus that the United States can and should do more to work with the Cuban people toward a future of democracy and prosperity.

#

FACTSHEET: FOOD SALES

U.S. Policy:

- On January 5 the President announced his decision to authorize licensing of sales of food and agricultural inputs to independent entities in Cuba.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to assist and support the Cuban people without strengthening the regime. Our objective, building on the visit of the Pontiff to Cuba and following up on the measures we announced last March 20, is to promote the development and evolution of peaceful independent activity and civil society. This will help promote a transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation, and will help prepare the Cuban people for that goal.

New Measures:

- Licensing, on a case-by-case basis, sales of food to entities independent of the Cuban government. This could include religious groups, private restaurants, and other such entities.
- Licensing, on a case-by-case basis, the sales of agricultural inputs to entities independent of the Cuban government. This could include private farmers, farmers in cooperatives raising food for sale in private markets, and other such entities.
- U.S. Government financing for such exports will not be authorized.
- The Departments of Commerce, the Treasury, and State will develop licensing procedures in the coming weeks.

Background:

- Sales of food and agricultural inputs were suspended in 1963.
- Sales to independent entities and non-governmental organizations will be licensed as a way to promote the development of activity independent of the government in order to encourage a peaceful democratic transition.

- The embargo remains in place, except for licensed activity, and will continue to be enforced.

FACTSHEET: REMITTANCES

U.S. Policy:

- On January 5 the President announced his decision to expand legal remittances to the Cuban people.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to support the Cuban people without strengthening the regime. Our objective, building on the visit of the Pontiff to Cuba, is to support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society in order to help promote a transition to a free, independent, and democratic state.

New Measures:

- Under a general license, any U.S. citizen will be authorized to send up to \$300 each quarter of the year to any Cuban family, except for senior-level Cuban government and communist party officials. Cuban-Americans will continue to be permitted to send remittances to family members.
- Remittances may be sent for humanitarian purposes, i.e., to support Cuban families.
- U.S. citizens and non-governmental organizations will be licensed, on a case-by-case basis, to send larger remittances to entities in Cuba that are independent of the Cuban government.
- The Departments of the Treasury and State will develop licensing and monitoring procedures.

Background:

- Legal remittances by Cuban-Americans to close family members in Cuba for humanitarian purposes were reinstituted in March 1998.
- Many Cubans are able to meet the most basic necessities of life for their families only by receiving humanitarian packages and financial assistance from relatives in the U.S.

- Expanding remittances helps promote greater individual freedom. Recipients will be less dependent on the state and less subject to its economic pressures.
- Expanding remittances beyond close family members of Cuban-Americans to other Cubans helps them for humanitarian purposes, reduces their dependence on the State and promotes independent civil society.

FACTSHEET: DIRECT FLIGHTS

U.S. Policy:

- On January 5 the President announced his decision to expand direct passenger charter flights to Cuba.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to support the Cuban people without strengthening the regime. Our objective, building on the visit of the Pontiff to Cuba, is to support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society in order to help the Cuban people prepare for a transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation.

New Measures:

- In addition to the existing licensed direct passenger charter flights to Havana from Miami, departures from some other U.S. cities will be authorized. In order to facilitate the licensed travel of individuals whose relatives live outside of Havana, direct flights will also be authorized to Cuban cities other than Havana.
- The Departments of the Treasury, Commerce, and State will develop implementing procedures in the coming weeks, and will continue to license qualified carrier service providers.

Background:

- The U.S. is expanding direct passenger charter flights as a way to facilitate family reunification and to promote people-to-people exchanges through licensed travel.
- This will promote the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society within Cuba.
- Travelers on all flights must be licensed. In addition to persons travelling once a year to visit close relatives, by far the largest category, other licensable travel includes persons travelling for clearly defined religious or educational activities, cultural activities, persons belonging to recognized human rights organizations and other non-governmental groups, journalists, and official U.S. Government travelers, among others.

FACTSHEET: INCREASED PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACTS

U.S. Policy:

- On January 5 the President announced his decision to expand people-to-people contacts.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to support the Cuban people without strengthening the regime. Our objective, building on the visit of the Pontiff to Cuba, is to support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society in order to help the Cuban people prepare for a transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation.

New Measures:

- We wish to encourage an expansion of educational, cultural, humanitarian, religious, journalistic and athletic exchange, and other appropriate people-to-people contacts. For example, the Baltimore Oriole's organization will be licensed to explore the possibility of playing exhibition games where profits would benefit Caritas-Cuba.
- These people-to-people contacts will be expanded in two ways: by facilitating travel of persons from Cuba to the U.S. who qualify for visas; and by streamlining licensing procedures for qualified U.S. persons travelling to Cuba.
- Travel from Cuba to the U.S.:

Qualified Cubans who are not senior members of the Cuban government or party will continue to be given visas.

The visa process will be streamlined and accelerated.
- Travel to Cuba from the U.S.:

Licensing procedures will be streamlined for qualified U.S. persons travelling to Cuba.

We will also develop procedures to license multiple visits for qualified individuals and groups in the above mentioned categories.

Travel for recreation or tourism, or travel otherwise in contravention of the embargo, continues to be prohibited.

- The Departments of Treasury, Justice, and State will develop licensing procedures.

Background:

- Expanding educational, cultural, journalistic, athletic, religious and humanitarian exchanges to and from Cuba will facilitate people-to-people contacts, specifically supporting the development of peaceful activities in Cuba independent of the Cuban government and promoting a peaceful transition to democracy.
- The revised visa procedures are not intended to expand contacts or relations between the U.S. and Cuban governments. Visa applications by senior-level Cuban officials will continue to be reviewed in Washington on a case-by-case basis.

FACTSHEET: DIRECT MAIL

U.S. Policy:

- On January 5 the President announced his decision to seek to re-establish direct mail service with Cuba.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to support the Cuban people without supporting the regime. Our objective, building on the visit of the Pontiff to Cuba, is to support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society in order to help the Cuban people prepare for a transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation.

New Measures:

- The U.S. Government will contact the Cuban government to work out the details of establishing direct mail service.

Background:

- Direct mail between the U.S. and Cuba is authorized by the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992. It was suspended in 1962.
- Currently mail is sent to and from Cuba via third countries, causing significant delays and sometimes losses.
- Establishing direct mail will facilitate people-to-people contacts, and will significantly expand the flow of information to the Cuban people.

FACTSHEET: INCREASED PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

U.S. Policy:

- The U.S. has an active public diplomacy effort around the world focusing on the deplorable human rights situation in Cuba.
- As the President has said, we want to continue to find ways to support the Cuban people without supporting the regime, support the development of peaceful independent activity and civil society. The U.S. will intensify efforts to bring the reality of Cuba to the attention of the world public opinion and world governments.

New Measures:

- USIA will study alternative broadcast sites in order to try to improve reception of Radio Marti and TV Marti.
- We will be seek to identify funding for a new aerostat for TV Marti broadcasts to Cuba.
- A new Presidential Advisory Board on Broadcasting to Cuba will be named.
- USIA and State Department will enhance public diplomacy programs to better inform Latin America and the EU countries on the reality of Cuba today.

CUBA: Measures in Support of Cuban People January 5, 1999

CONTEXT: *The President will announce today that he has authorized steps -- building on measures the Administration took last March-- to increase support to the Cuban people. Secretary Albright yesterday provided a background briefing to the press on the measures. After release of the President's statement mid-day today, the Secretary will make a statement, and ARA Assistant Secretary Pete Romero, NSC Senior Director Jim Dobbins, and ARA's director for Cuban affairs will provide an in-depth press briefing over at State.*

What do you plan to announce today?

- Will have a Presidential statement for you around mid-day, followed by a statement by Secretary Albright and in-depth briefing over at State.
- Will announce that the President has authorized certain measures in support of the Cuban people -- to ease current humanitarian plight and help prepare for democratic future.
- Measures build on the success of similar steps the President authorized back in March.
- Deal with allowing increased remittances; food sales to private entities; broader exchanges; expanded charter flights; and efforts to establish direct mail service.
- Detailed briefing will be provided at State.

How quickly will these measures be implemented?

- The Departments of Treasury (Office of Foreign Assets Control), Commerce and State will immediately begin developing implementation guidelines. Implementing regulations will be published expeditiously, in coming weeks.

Is this a back-door way of softening the embargo?

- No. Embargo remains in place. Policy is to keep pressure on the Cuban government to change -- through the embargo and diplomatic efforts -- while reaching out to the Cuban people to encourage independent, nongovernmental activity and promote emergence of civil society.
- As in last March, will implement the measures in a manner that maximizes benefit to the Cuban people and minimizes benefit to the government.
- Detailed briefing will be provided at State.

Is it true that the Baltimore Orioles are being licensed to play in Havana?

- Orioles are being licensed to conduct exploratory talks with Cuban government on holding charity exhibition games, with profits going to Cuban religious groups.
- Expansion of such people-to-people contacts are intended to increase support to the Cuban people and encourage development of civil society.

We've heard that the President has decided against forming the bipartisan commission on Cuba that Senator Warner and others recommended. Why?

- Have studied proposal with great care. Is a serious proposal, put forward in a constructive spirit by individuals of great experience and stature.
- On consideration, we have concluded that the better course for the present is to continue to develop and implement policy toward Cuba on the basis of bipartisan consultations with the Congress.
- We believe there is broad bipartisan support for the basic thrust of our policy -- which is to help the Cuban people prepare for a peaceful democratic transition, and to promote the development of civil society and the expansion of contacts with the Cuban people in ways that do not strengthen the Cuban regime.
- Measures announced by the Administration last March to this end received broad support in the Congress and in the country. We believe the further measures we are announcing today will also secure such support.
- Accordingly, Secretary Albright advised the President, and the President agreed, not to proceed with the creation of a commission, but rather to continue to consider and develop ways to support the Cuban people and promote a democratic transition without strengthening the Cuban government. The Administration will continue to consult on a bipartisan basis with all interested members of Congress and the public.
- In this connection, we note and appreciate the input we continue to receive from a variety of private and nongovernmental experts, advisory groups, and other interested constituencies throughout the country.